WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device retrieving apparatus that retrieves a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network,

said device retrieving apparatus comprising:

a display unit having a screen;

an input unit that is used to externally input an instruction; and

a control unit,

said control unit, when an individual description of the desired person is externally input as a specific individual description via said input unit, gaining access to a database that is present on the network or in said device retrieving apparatus, obtaining a device description mapped to the input specific individual description out of mapping information, which is stored in said database and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network, and causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

2. A device retrieving apparatus that retrieves a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network,

said device retrieving apparatus comprising:

a display unit having a screen;

an input unit that is used to externally input an instruction; and

a control unit,

said control unit causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals to be displayed on the screen of said display unit,

said control unit, when an instruction is given externally via said input unit to select a specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired

5 person among the individual symbols displayed on the screen, specifying an individual description of the desired person corresponding to the selected specific individual symbol as a specific individual description, gaining access to a database that is present on the network or in said device retrieving apparatus, obtaining a device description mapped to the specific individual

10 description out of mapping information, which is stored in said database and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network, and causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be

15 displayed on the screen of said display unit.

3. A device retrieving apparatus that retrieves a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network,

said device retrieving apparatus comprising:

20 a display unit having a screen;

an input unit that is used to externally input an instruction; and

a control unit,

said control unit causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on

25 the screen of said display unit,

said control unit, when an instruction is given externally via said input unit to map a desired first device symbol among the device symbols displayed on the screen to a specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired person, specifying an individual description of the desired person

5   corresponding to the mapped individual symbol as a specific individual description, gaining access to a database that is present on the network or in said device retrieving apparatus, obtaining a device description mapped to the specific individual description out of mapping information, which is stored in said database and regards mapping of a plurality of individual

10   descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network, and causing at least one of the obtained device description and a second device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

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4. A device retrieving apparatus in accordance with claim 3, wherein said control unit, in the case where a device represented by the first device symbol keeps data, causes data symbols representing respective data kept in the device to be displayed in a specific area on the screen of said display unit,

20   which is different from an area in which at least one of the obtained device description and the corresponding second device symbol is displayed.

5. A device retrieving apparatus in accordance with ~~any one of claims 1 through 4,~~ _Claim 1_ wherein the mapping information includes individual

25   positions-related information with regard to mapping of positions related to

individuals to the individual descriptions and device positions-related information with regard to mapping of positions related to devices to the device descriptions, and

said control unit specifies a position mapped to the specific individual

5   description from the individual positions-related information, reads a device description mapped to the specified position out of the device positions-related information, and obtains the read-out device description as the device description mapped to the specific individual description.

10   6. A method of retrieving a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and displaying a result of retrieval on a screen of a display unit,

said method comprising the steps of:

(a) specifying an individual description of the desired person;

15   (b) obtaining a device description mapped to the specified individual description out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

(c) causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device

20   symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

7. A method of retrieving a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and displaying a result of

25   retrieval on a screen of a display unit,

said method comprising the steps of:

(a) causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals to be displayed on the screen of said display unit;

(b) selecting a specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired person among the individual symbols displayed;

(c) obtaining a device description mapped to an individual description of the desired person corresponding to the selected specific individual symbol out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

(d) causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

8. A method of retrieving a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and displaying a result of retrieval on a screen of a display unit,

said method comprising the steps of:

(a) causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on the screen of said display unit;

(b) mapping a desired device symbol among the device symbols displayed to a specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired person;

(c) obtaining a device description mapped to an individual description of the desired person corresponding to the mapped specific individual symbol

out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

(d) causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

9. A computer readable recording medium in which a specific computer program is recorded, said specific computer program being used to retrieve a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and display a result of retrieval on a screen of a display unit connecting with a computer,

said specific computer program causing the computer to attain the functions of:

when an individual description of the desired person is externally input into the computer, obtaining a device description mapped to the input individual description out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

10. A computer readable recording medium in which a specific

computer program is recorded, said specific computer program being used to retrieve a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and display a result of retrieval on a screen of a display unit connecting with a computer,

5   said specific computer program causing the computer to attain the functions of:

causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals to be displayed on the screen of said display unit;

when an instruction is given externally to the computer to select a
10   specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired person among the individual symbols displayed on the screen, obtaining a device description mapped to an individual description of the desired person corresponding to the selected specific individual symbol out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual
15   descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

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11. A computer readable recording medium in which a specific computer program is recorded, said specific computer program being used to retrieve a device mapped to a desired person among a plurality of devices present on a network and display a result of retrieval on a screen of a display
25   unit connecting with a computer,

said specific computer program causing the computer to attain the functions of:

causing individual symbols corresponding to individuals and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on the screen of said

5   display unit;

when an instruction is given externally to the computer to map a desired device symbol among the device symbols displayed on the screen to a specific individual symbol corresponding to the desired person, obtaining a device description mapped to an individual description of the desired person

10   corresponding to the mapped specific individual symbol out of mapping information, which is provided in advance and regards mapping of a plurality of individual descriptions to device descriptions expressing said plurality of devices present on the network; and

causing at least one of the obtained device description and a device

15   symbol representing a device expressed by the obtained device description to be displayed on the screen of said display unit.

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